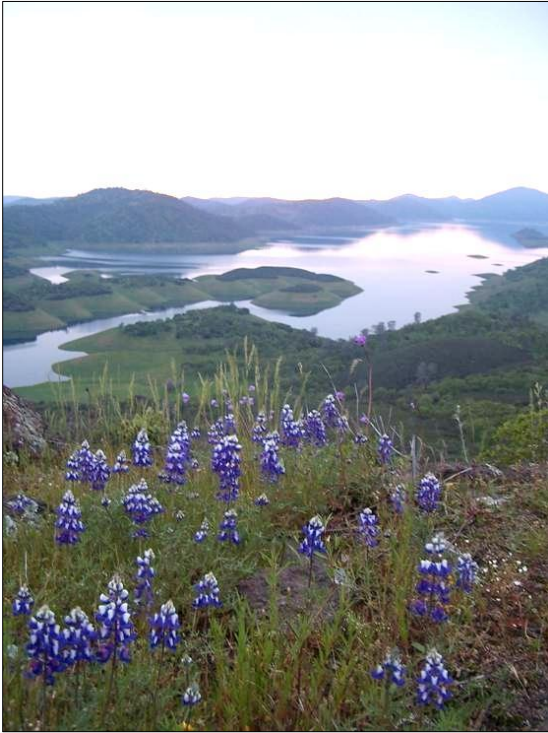


Hiking to the Top of Table Mountain – Worth the Effort!



Taken several years ago, this lovely photo of the view from the top of Table Mountain includes picturesque New Melones Lake and, in the summer, beautiful lupine (surprisingly, a member of the pea family).

encourage children and their families to enjoy outdoor activities, which abound in every city, town and community (<http://www.letsmove.gov/lets-move-outside>).

Although the hikers pictured below trekked to the top of New Melones Lake's Table Mountain back on December 28, 2013, springtime is a great time to let folks know what a beautiful view awaits them if they make the effort to hike the mountain.

The 22 hikers, whose ages ranged from 7 to 70, enjoyed a vigorous hike up Table Mountain, a unique geologic formation that frames the south side of New Melones Lake. One young participant accomplished the 3-mile hike to finish his requirements for a Cub Scout Arrow Badge!

The hikers discussed the formation of the mountain, mining activity, animal inhabitants, vernal pools, and wildflowers. They also talked about ways to protect this unique area into the future.

The hike tied into President Obama's *America's Great Outdoors* initiative (<http://americasgreatoutdoors.gov/>), which seeks to empower Americans to share in the responsibility to conserve, restore and provide better access to our lands and waters and leave a healthy, vibrant outdoor legacy for generations to come. It also supported the Department of the Interior's *Let's Move Outside* initiative, which was created to

